

# Metro Transit Police



## Message from the Chief



The past five months have brought several changes to the job of policing mass transit in King County. Summer marked the start of Sound Transit's new Link light rail service, which is operated by King County Metro Transit, and expanded hours of operation in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. We realigned our workforce and hired additional security guards to support these new services.

The coming of light rail also brought us a new transit policing partner. Sound Transit has contracted with the King County Sheriff's Office for police services

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## Bus driver honored for helping to catch murder suspect

On July 19, the Seattle community of South Park was shocked by a brutal assault on two women, and the murder of one of them, by a stranger who entered their home while they were asleep. Five days later, the Seattle Police Department identified a suspect, a man who was known to be a frequent bus rider and who had previously caused a disturbance on a Metro bus.

Metro Transit Police Detective Jesse Herrera provided this suspect's description to Metro Transit bus drivers with a request that they keep an eye out for him. That same day, James Gayden was driving a Metro Route 74 bus near Magnuson Park when a man matching that description got off the bus without paying. Gayden contacted Metro's Transit Control Center, which immediately notified police. Seattle Police units arrived within minutes and arrested the man without incident.

On Sept. 15, representatives of Metro and the Metro Transit Police met at Metro's Central

bus base to honor Gayden for helping to put this suspect behind bars. The transit police presented Gayden with an Outstanding Action Award for his alertness, professionalism, and commitment to safety.

Major Dave Jutilla, the Metro Transit Police chief, said Gayden's actions exemplify the core values of the Metro Transit Police and King County Sheriff's Office: leadership, integrity, service, and teamwork. "You took safe action as a community leader, you did the right thing as demonstrated by your integrity, you provided a

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**ABOVE:** Bus driver James Gayden's actions "brought credit to himself and to Metro, and may well have prevented further crimes by this dangerous suspect," said Major Dave Jutilla, Metro Transit Police chief. Above, Gayden, on right, is congratulated by Metro's Operations Manager, Jim O'Rourke (on left), while Metro General Manager Kevin Desmond (partly visible behind O'Rourke) and Jutilla (center) look on.

**Message from the Chief**

to support security on the new light rail system, establishing the new Sound Transit Police Department. The two transit police agencies are committed to supporting one other in the field and to providing excellent transit security for our region.

We have another valuable partner in the Transit Security Administration (TSA), which has provided us with security training and grant support. Earlier this year, a partnership with the TSA provided an opportunity for local and regional bomb squads to train at transit facilities and on transit vehicles. The TSA has also supported us through its Transit Security Grant Program, which has provided funding for enhanced staffing to focus on Homeland Security needs. In 2010, this grant will fund the formation of a transit anti-terrorism team in partnership with Sound Transit. This team will focus on efforts to reduce terrorism-related risks to transit customers, employees, and properties.

Sincerely,

Dave Jutilla  
Chief of Police Services  
Metro Transit Police  
Major, King County Sheriff's  
Office

## Meet our administration staff

*By Scott Strathy, Administrative Captain*



**Captain Scott Strathy**

As Administrative Captain for the Metro Transit Police, I oversee the Criminal Investigations and Street Crimes units.

The Criminal Investigation Unit, with one sergeant and three detectives, does investigative work similar to that of any other medium-sized police department. The officers follow up on assault, robbery, theft, and fraud cases, contacting victims and witnesses, identifying suspects, submitting cases to the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and testifying in court. One of their highest priorities is investigating assaults on Metro bus drivers. They also maintain our crime statistics and work closely with the Seattle School District to ensure the safety and security of students traveling to and from school on Metro buses.

The sergeant in this unit also supervises a non-commissioned Metro security liaison and two administrative specialists. The security liaison closely monitors security incident reports, looking for patterns or trends, and helps our supervisors decide where to allocate transit police resources. The liaison is also responsible for reviewing video footage from more than 200 buses equipped with closed-circuit cameras. Video evidence from these cameras has helped us and other local law enforcement agencies solve a significant number of crimes.

The administrative specialists handle all phone and walk-in inquiries and manage the rider suspension database. They also prepare investigation materials, track financial and purchasing accounts, support training activities, and manage a variety of administrative projects.



**Members of our Criminal Investigation Unit are, from left, deputies Jesse Harrera and Dennis Wilson, Sergeant Barb Etienne, and deputy Megan Dauber.**

The plainclothes Street Crimes Unit has one sergeant and six deputies. These detectives focus on problems on buses and in bus shelters. One day they might be working undercover to track down a known felony suspect; the next, they might be arresting riders who violate Metro's code of conduct or working to reduce assaults on bus drivers. Bus drivers may not recognize members of this team when they board a bus, but the detectives always identify themselves as they leave.

Although they keep a much lower profile than our regular uniformed patrol and bike deputies, the commissioned and non-commissioned members of our Administrative Section are just as important in our effort to maintain a safe and secure transit experience for Metro's drivers and customers.

# Bus cameras provide valuable record

Before getting into mischief on a Metro bus, remember to smile—you could be on camera. Some 245 of Metro's 1,300 buses are equipped with camera systems that record what happens on board. These videos are used to identify riders who don't pay, vandalize the bus, cause disturbances, assault other riders or the bus driver, or are involved in other crimes on or off the bus.

Metro began experimenting with cameras on buses in 1997, and in 2002 began installing digital video recorders on about 20 percent of its buses. State-of-the-art at the time, these recorders are now being replaced with a new digital system that offers improved images and the ability to store those images for a longer period.

Metro assigns camera-equipped buses to routes based on the number of security problems reported by bus drivers. On any given week, the agency downloads 35-50 videos to use for incident follow-up, criminal investigation, and safety and risk management.

For example, two assaults were caught on camera in May of this year:

1. A man on a Route 71 bus in downtown Seattle got upset when another passenger asked the driver questions, and began making rude comments. Told to leave the bus, he hit the driver in the face on the way out.



**A man, at right, punches a bus driver.**

Metro Transit Police circulated video and still photos of this incident, and Department of Corrections



**A young man (in cap) assaults another rider on a bus.**



**The same man spits on a Metro driver earlier in the day.**

officers identified the assailant. He was arrested seven days after the incident, and is currently serving 51 months in prison.

2. On a Route 106 bus with a camera system, two men wearing gang-affiliated clothing assaulted a youth for no apparent reason (above, top photo) and were arrested. In reviewing video of the incident, a Metro employee noticed that one of the assailants was also featured in a video of a different incident from earlier that same day, in which he spat on a bus driver who had told him to turn down his music and stop rapping on the bus (above, bottom photo). The suspect was charged with both crimes.

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## Bus driver honored

valuable service to your community and your customers, and you employed teamwork by working with your coordinator to summon a police response.”

Kevin Desmond, Metro's general manager, presented Gayden with a letter of thanks from the mayor of Seattle for his role in bringing this suspect to justice, and Jim O'Rourke, Metro's operations manager, presented a card on which South Park residents had written personal notes of thanks.



## Ride safe

### Stay alert

Avoid visibly displaying valuables, such as iPods and money.

### Report problems on your bus

Report any safety or security problems on the bus to the driver. If you witness an emergency and have a phone, call 911. Know the bus route number and the direction of travel. If possible, also give the coach number, visible in the right front corner on the inside of the bus.

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## Transit security for major community events

Metro provides transit services for major community events, including Seattle's Fourth of July fireworks show, the Kent Cornucopia Days, and the SeaFair Torchlight Parade in downtown Seattle. This service provides community members with a way to get safely to and from these events without having to find parking or navigate the traffic jams that can happen when everyone tries to arrive or leave at the same time.

The Metro Transit Police work in partnership with Metro to support system safety and security for customers and employees at these events. Many people—both riders and non-riders—have expressed appreciation for our police presence at these events.

On July 25, we secured Metro's bus stops and facilities for Seattle's Torchlight Parade. For the first time in several years, Metro's Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel was open for passenger service during the parade, and buses and trains had started sharing the tunnel for the first time only a week before.

Sergeants and deputies from the Metro Transit Police and King County Sheriff's Office were posted at nine locations throughout the system — five in the tunnel and four on surface streets. Members of the Bicycle Emphasis and Enforcement Squad (BEES) patrolled the Third Avenue corridor, while detectives from the Sheriff's Office monitored gang activity.

Our officers patrolled the parade route and surrounding streets before the parade, then went to their assigned posts to help manage the large crowds wanting to board buses when the parade was over. They also assisted Metro employees as they loaded the buses quickly to disperse the crowds.

It gives us great pleasure to report that there were no major Metro-related problems on surface streets or in the tunnel immediately before, during, or after the Torchlight Parade.



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